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ABSTRACT

A project sought ways in which colleges and universities can work more closely with the federally funded Job Training Partnership Act to help the unemployed find work and to encourage business startups and expansion. Partnerships between postsecondary educational institutions and Private Industry Councils (PICs) at six sites were encouraged during a two-year demonstration project. Participating PICs developed improved training programs, especially for dislocated workers, and created new jobs through economic development activities with local colleges. Postsecondary institutions learned how to integrate nontraditional students on their campuses, became more involved with community development, and, for the first time, met with other higher educational institutions to discuss community problems. Some joined new PIC educational advisory committees. The creation of new joint economic development projects and PIC education advisory councils indicated that interaction between PICs and higher education will continue after the project expires. (Summaries of activities at the six sites are presented. An appendix provides names and addresses of principal contacts of the PIC/Higher Education Collaboration Project and names, addresses, and brief descriptions of principal contacts from related projects funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.) (YLB)

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New PIC/Postsecondary Partnerships:

How Postsecondary Institutions and Private Industry Councils are Working Together to Boost Economic Development and Put People Back To Work

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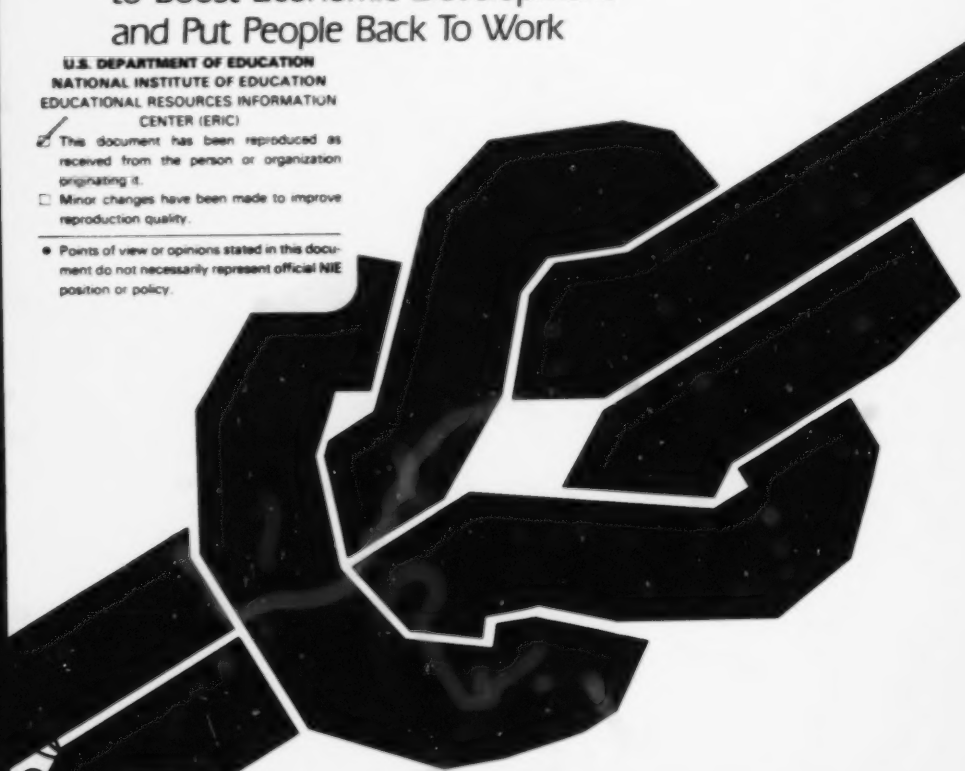

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How Postsecondary Institutions and Private Industry Councils are Working Together to Boost Economic Development and Put People Back to Work

by Shirley Fox

A Project Conducted by

The National Association of
Private Industry Councils

in Collaboration with

The National Institute
for Work and Learning

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the Improvement of
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NEW PIC/POSTSECONDARY ALLIANCES

How Postsecondary Institutions and Private Industry Councils are Working Together to Boost Economic Development and Put People Back to Work

Foreword

Communities react to economic calamity and high unemployment in different ways. Some simply wither away. Others struggle along as best they can, hoping for better times.

Increasingly, however, community leaders recognize they have more power than they ever realized to bring in new businesses, encourage existing ones, and help put people back to work. A multitude of educational, skill training and funding resources exists in even the most devastated communities. The challenge is to assemble them into a coherent and practical strategy.

But institutional "collaboration" is never easy. Politics, personalities, and traditions have thwarted even well-designed collaborative projects.

In many cases, the major obstacle is simply that institutions have never worked together before. Such is the case of colleges and universities and the 592 Private Industry Councils (PICs) created under the federal government's Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

It would seem a natural alliance. PICs fund an enormous range of education and training programs to help economically disadvantaged and displaced workers obtain steady employment. Postsecondary schools, on the other hand, have long experience providing classroom and vocational training to degree-seeking students. They are also a repository of data collection, analysis and management skills that could be very valuable to the JTPA community.

Collaborative arrangements between JTPA and postsecondary schools are not unknown. Indeed, among two-year community colleges, partnerships have flourished for at least a decade. But collaboration remains weak between four-year colleges and universities and the PICs. The potential benefits are untapped.

To discover more about how postsecondary schools and PICs can work together more productively, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) financed a two-year, six-site project. The project was conducted by the National Association of Private Industry Councils with the cooperation of the National Institute for Work and Learning.

During the project, NAPIC and NIWL provided a variety of technical assistance, including workshops, on-site visits and a newsletter. Neither the colleges nor the PICs were paid to explore these new collaborative arrangements.

Despite the absence of a direct financial incentive to participants, results of the project were encouraging, particularly in communities still plagued by declining economies and high unemployment.

Perhaps the most impressive was the development of new business "incubator" projects in Flint, Michigan; Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, Dunkirk, New York and at several sites in Northwest Pennsylvania. In some cases, these incubators were the direct result of collaborative arrangements between PICs and postsecondary schools participating in the FIPSE project. Providing a subsidized and tax-sheltered environment linked with customized training, incubators are among the most promising new methods to encourage business growth in depressed areas.

Other collaborative outcomes included creation of a new PIC educational advisory council in Northwest

Pennsylvania; integration of JTPA trainees (especially laid-off adult workers) onto college campuses; new short-term intensive curricula for JTPA trainees; sharing of employers' training facilities and equipment with small business people and JTPA trainees; and creation of a regional patent library depository.

But perhaps the most important outcome of this project was the collaborative process itself — a new level of communication that had not existed before between postsecondary schools and PICs. With these linkages now in place, even more innovative training and economic development projects are possible.

What lessons are we to draw from this experiment? First, that collaboration is more than an intriguing concept; it is a working reality in a growing number of communities. Second, that collaboration flowers best in an environment in which decisionmakers are open to change and have an existing commitment to quality education and training for all.

A third lesson is that collaboration will take root when there is a severe local challenge that involves every sector of the community. In this project, the challenge was economic decline and resulting high unemployment. In other areas, a different issue might serve to unite the community. The point is that collaboration will not happen simply because it sounds like a good idea. It must appear to be a practical solution to a real problem.

Other points are contained in the following report. What emerges most clearly is a portrait of six communities willing to try something new. In some cases, the results were disappointing, in others the results were far above expectations. But the promise of collaboration between postsecondary schools and PICs is clearly evident from this project. It remains for additional communities to see that promise, form alliances, and bring all their resources to bear on serious economic and social issues.

I. INTRODUCTION

This project sought to discover ways in which colleges and universities can work more closely with the federally funded Job Training Partnership Act to help the unemployed find work and to encourage business startups and expansion. Toward that goal, partnerships between postsecondary educational institutions and Private Industry Councils (PICs) at six sites were encouraged during a two year demonstration project conducted by the National Association of Private Industry Councils (NAPIC) in cooperation with the National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL).

The results were encouraging. Participating PICs developed improved training programs, especially for dislocated workers, and created new jobs through economic development activities with local colleges. Postsecondary institutions learned how to integrate nontraditional students on their campuses; became more involved with community economic development; and, for the first time, met with other higher educational institutions to discuss community problems. Some have joined new PIC educational advisory committees.

It is significant that collaboration occurred generally between university and college administrators and PIC staff, not just between governing boards of these institutions. Local economic crisis motivated most of the collaborative efforts. Solutions focused on customized training to meet recognized skill shortages, or on creation of new jobs. Broader collaboration, for example development of better labor market information or of PIC two year plans, did not materialize at most sites, however.

The creation of new joint economic development projects and PIC education advisory councils indicate that interaction between PICs and higher education will continue after this project has expired.

II. BACKGROUND

Higher education no longer has a monopoly on adult education. Corporate and government expenditures for training and education now exceed that spent by the nation's 3,000 colleges and universities.

The main objective of federal employment and training programs is to help hard-to-employ persons improve their employability and obtain employment. Because most jobs are in the private sector, more business involvement is highly desirable. The Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (JTPA) was a major step in efforts to increase the involvement of employers in the employment and training system. Local business-led Private Industry Councils were given co-equal authority with local elected officials for determining how job training funds should be spent in their communities, including who shall provide the education and training to JTPA clients.

Governors also have been given more authority to coordinate JTPA efforts statewide with related education, economic development, job placement, and social service programs. The success of JTPA will be greatly influenced by the extent to which state and local elected officials and PIC board volunteers from business, education, community groups, government, and labor are able to develop a cooperative job training strategy.

Collaborative activities developed through this project have focused on participants served under JTPA Titles IIA and III, primarily Title III. Title II authorizes local training services for disadvantaged youth and adults.

Title III establishes a program for dislocated workers and is administered by the states. To receive federal money each state must match federal funds on a declining scale based on state unemployment rates. While state government has prime responsibility for

retraining programs, JTPA provides that local PICs should advise the governor on the nature and extent of the displaced worker problem in their communities and on the availability of appropriate jobs and training opportunities.

PICs and the institutions with which they work, including education, face the following problems in the delivery of quality job training:

A. Influencing the cost-effective expenditure of public and private resources for education and job training.

B. Obtaining and using reliable data on the local labor market; and

C. Developing collaborative relationships with other institutions in the community to improve services to the constituents of each.

To solve these problems, each sector needs access to all the resources available. For example, postsecondary institutions need to match curricula to industry needs, to update equipment, and to improve teacher awareness of changing technology. PICs need access to research capabilities, administrative support, classroom and training facilities, and support services for clients.

Higher education is also qualified to provide labor market data and analysis and to assist in program evaluation. PICs, in return, can help higher education understand the needs of employers and provide a means for ongoing communication.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On November 28, 1983 NAPIC mailed a request for proposal (RFP) to approximately 225 PICs.

Fifteen PICs responded to the solicitation. A review panel recommended the following PICs for inclusion in the project: Columbus, OH; Northern ID; Northwest PA; Franklin and Adams Counties, PA; Chautauqua County, NY; and Flint, MI.

Three workshops were held for representatives from education and the PIC from each of the participating sites.

During these workshops, the PICs and the colleges identified several issues of common concern. These included:

- excessive state reporting and paperwork requirements;

- uncertainty as to allowability of costs for some services, and thus a reluctance to take risks;

- placement-driven performance standards which inhibit entrepreneurial programs because of difficulty in measuring their success; and

- difficulty reconciling short-term training and placement with longer term economic development.

Also, during the project, seven issues of the PIC/HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATION PROJECT BULLETIN were prepared and disseminated to the six project sites.

IV. PROJECT RESULTS

The PIC/Higher Education Collaboration Project has been a catalyst for broader, more comprehensive collaborative activities between Private Industry Councils and institutions of higher education in each of the six sites. Workshops and newsletters provided a network for exchange of information and discussions of potential collaborative activities. Linking this project to FIPSE's Education and the Economy Alliance projects increased the networking. Examples of increased collaboration include:

- development of an Educational Advisory Committee to the Northwest Pennsylvania Training Partnership Consortium, with representation from the three colleges participating in this project, in addition to other levels of education in the seven county Service Delivery Area (SDA).

- involvement of PICs and institutions of higher education in community economic planning, particularly in incubator projects to encourage the development of small businesses and the creation of new jobs in participating SDAs, in Flint, Michigan; Shippensburg, Pennsylvania; Dunkirk, New York; and in Northwest Pennsylvania at several sites.

- integration of JTPA clients on several campuses, as individuals in traditional classrooms and in class-size training, often in intensified and shortened courses adapted to the needs of the students, or customized for employers.

- utilization of Computer Assisted Design/Computer Assisted Manufacturing (CAD/CAM) equipment and laboratories of the General Motors Institute, Flint, by employees of small businesses that could not afford such equipment and by clients of a Business and Industry Development Center for entrepreneurs.

V. CONCLUSIONS

From the experience of the six SDAs in this project, it appears that institutions of higher education are becoming more involved with economic development and with JTPA/PIC employment training programs. This involvement is due in large part to the high unemployment rates in their communities, changing skill needs, and declining enrollment of traditional degree-seeking students. The growth of the incubator movement to encourage the development of small businesses and new jobs also created an opportunity for collaboration. Colleges and universities were well positioned to provide technical assistance such as financial and general management, marketing and labor market analysis. PICs were able to recruit, counsel and train employees for incubator tenants.

The extent of collaborative activities, however, seems to be directly related to the political climate in the area and the willingness of the PIC executive directors and their boards, and of the presidents and deans of colleges, to be flexible and open to new ideas and activities. For example, an Industry Education Advisory Committee created in one SDA failed for lack of leadership and acceptance of responsibility by its members. But in another SDA, where the three colleges each has a community service mission, and the PIC and the colleges share the view that education is as important as job skills, an Education Advisory Committee to the PIC was successfully established. In general, collaboration seems to be strongest where:

- there was top level commitment from CEO's of educational institutions and appropriate back-up at the next lower organizational level;

- an atmosphere of trust and information sharing was encouraged as a prelude to decision making and assumption of specific institutional roles;

- educational institutions had some previous experience with adult learners and perceived a need for expanding their student enrollments;

- the collaboration process was viewed by new university administrators or CEO's as a means for becoming more knowledgeable about the communities their institutions serve and other resources available to them;

- PIC involvement included members of the Board as well as administrative staff, and

- frequent, structured meetings were scheduled for interaction between PIC and educational representatives.

In the present rapidly changing economy, universities are being viewed not only as a training resource serving the economy but as a component of the economy, contributing new technologies and assisting in capital formation. Higher education can play many roles to assist PICs in carrying out their mandate to help the unemployed find jobs and to improve the economic climate of their communities. They can: 1) provide customized training for employers or general basic education for JTPA clients; 2) help develop incubator projects; 3) provide research and management assistance for the PICs, while benefiting themselves through higher enrollments, a more heterogenous student body, and an awareness of the needs of non-traditional students; 4) arrange more flexible schedules and specialized courses to serve more students, and; 5) benefit the community by helping improve the economic climate.

PICs, in turn, can link education to economic development and to the private sector, while benefitting from additional educational resources.

Participants in the six sites recognized the benefit of collaborative activities. It is expected that the exchange of information and trusting relationships built up through this project will continue for many years.

VI. SUMMARIES OF ACTIVITIES AT THE SIX SITES

Chautauqua County Private Industry Council (Mayville, NY)/State University College (SUC) of New York at Fredonia

Thirty skilled but unemployed workers in Chautauqua County who had no hope of returning to their former jobs participated in a three week training program conducted jointly by the Continuing Education Department of Fredonia SUC and the Private Industry Council (PIC). Initially, training was to have focused on automation, basic mathematics and microcomputers. The curriculum was modified, however, based on a study by a professor from the business school which revealed that employers were most interested in hiring persons with good communications skills who could be trained to use equipment specific to the company.

Participants were trained in groups of ten. They were assessed and counseled as to their job interests and aptitudes. They also were taught how to look for jobs more effectively. In addition, they were trained in communications skills, math and computer literacy. Seven were placed in on-the-job training with employers, and ten more were successful in obtaining jobs.

This program exposed SUC to JTPA clients for the first time. Faculty were challenged by and enjoyed working with this group of nontraditional students. As a result, a specialized microcomputer teaching laboratory has been established. Software is available for self-directed math remediation, computer awareness, and skills assessment.

In addition, there is ongoing collaboration among the SUC, the PIC, and the Industrial Development Agency to develop a business incubator project. The SUC would like to continue serving dislocated workers and other JTPA clients but found State funding requirements cumbersome and time-consuming.

Franklin-Adams Employment and Training Consortium (Chambersburg, PA)/Shippensburg University, Wilson College and Monte Alto Campus of Pennsylvania State University

Prior to this project, higher education was not much involved with the PIC. There was no college or university representation on the PIC Board, nor had higher education provided much training for JTPA clients. An Industry Education Advisory Committee (IEAC), which included the deans of continuing education from two of the colleges and the director of the Institute for Service of the third, was to provide services for JTPA program planning. These included labor market data collection and analysis; program design; seminars on job-search skills; and career and personal counseling.

Adams County is rural and had been part of the Balance of State under CETA. It was joined to Franklin County under JTPA to form one Service Delivery Area. Residents have strong institutional loyalties that work against collaboration. Even within Franklin County, workers are reluctant to commute between the two major cities of Shippensburg and Chambersburg. The IEAC met infrequently with little leadership at the beginning of the project and did not carry out its intended mission.

However, relationships developed among IEAC representatives, the PIC, higher education, the Chambers of Commerce in Chambersburg and Shippensburg and the Industrial Development Association of Adams County. These led to meetings with the State Industry/Education Coordinator and staff of the Ben Franklin Partnership to discuss establishment of an incubator project. Shippensburg University took the lead and is working with a local development corporation to establish an incubator in Shippensburg. The other two colleges are not involved.

One dean of continuing education said the IEAC did not function as planned because of confusion as to responsibilities — he was waiting to be asked to do something, rather than to take the initiative. "Maybe it's me, I'm a conservative," he said. The new head of the Continuing Education Department at the third college, however, is very interested in reactivating the committee, despite the political climate in the area.

At a minimum, however, the PIC will continue to work with Shippensburg University on the incubator project.

Genesee/Shiawassee Employment and Training (Flint, Michigan)/University of Michigan-Flint, Mott Community College, Baker Community College, GMI Engineering and Management Institute

The initial focus of this project, to provide direct services to dislocated workers (over 7,000 persons at the beginning of the project), was changed when about 6,500 workers were recalled by their employers. The remaining high unemployment rate of about 12 percent led to concentration instead on job creation activities for the "hard-core" structurally unemployed. A committee of the CEOs of the four higher education institutions was established, with the PIC executive director serving as staff. Formal, monthly meetings allowed members to discuss matters of general community concern and to identify the appropriate roles for each institution to avoid duplication of efforts.

Three activities were identified for collaborative action. The first is a business incubator project. The educational institutions will provide business related services and the PIC will recruit and train employees. A Community Growth Alliance Project is to link the committee to the Flint-Genesee Corporation, a local non-profit economic development corporation, which

has applied for state funding. A third project is a study of the changing concept of work. Research is also being conducted on job restructuring to test the feasibility of "multiple person jobs," also known as job sharing. The PIC has computerized lists of the skills required to perform about 1,600 jobs in the area. This list will be used to develop new curricula.

Northwest Pennsylvania Training Partnership Consortium (NPTPC) (Franklin, PA)/Alliance College, Thiel College, and the Shenango Valley Campus of Pennsylvania State University

Existing relationships between the PIC and individual postsecondary institutions in this seven county SDA were expanded during this project. The three colleges participating in this project now work more closely with each other. A new "Educational Advisory Committee" to the PIC has been established which includes the three colleges, the Higher Education Council of Warren and Forest Counties, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

The NPTPC and the three colleges share the attitude that individuals will be more productive workers if they have a broad educational base as well as training in specific job skills. As a result, these colleges and others in the area have provided training for JTPA participants on their campuses, integrated some individuals into the traditional classroom, housed some in college dormitories, and encouraged JTPA students to work toward AA and higher degrees.

The initial goals of the project have been more than met: to provide basic skills as well as technical training; to consider schedule revisions (for example, a computer course was shortened and made more intensive); to create an Associate of Arts degree in business management; to "prime the pump" so that JTPA

trainees in an educational program can continue their education and training on their own; and to develop needed skills centers.

An unexpected outcome of the project has been the award of a FIPSE grant to Thiel College to develop a Mercer County Economic Resource Development Center. Under the grant, the College will also establish a comprehensive faculty development program and an innovative curriculum for displaced workers and other non-traditional learners.

Private Industry Council of Columbus and Franklin County (Columbus, Ohio)/National Center for Research in Vocational Education at the Ohio State University

During the project, the PIC and the National Center for Research in Vocational Education began to work together for the first time. The PIC now uses the research capability of the National Center and, in turn, provides the National Center with its expertise as a practitioner in the employment and training field. In addition, Columbus has just been awarded its first Title III money from the state of Ohio to serve workers displaced from the shoe industry, through activities coordinated by the PIC and operated through the National Center and a local technical college.

The National Center also has been funded by the PIC to conduct an employment study for Franklin County.

The original goal (analyzing data on workers, occupations and industries experiencing displacement and developing a comprehensive community program to address dislocation) was changed when the data base expected to be used did not contain the information necessary for such an analysis.

Region I, North Idaho Private Industry Council (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho)/North Idaho College

Initial goals were to identify, coordinate and use available resources in five counties in North Idaho (Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone) to assist workers laid off from the wood products and silver mining industries. After the project began, a major electronics plant in Kootenai County moved to Mexico, creating another group of dislocated workers needing help. Activities focused on job training and counseling provided by North Idaho College, relocation, and job placement, supplemented by information on available social services. The PIC coordinated services of the AFL-CIO, the Job Service and the Panhandle Area Council, an economic development agency. These services were funded from a variety of sources, including the Trade Readjustment Act, the Work Incentive Program, and the Governor's and Secretary of Labor's Title III Dislocated Worker monies. The economy of the area is changing and becoming more diversified, with an increase in tourism and small businesses. A rural incubator project is planned.

Prior to this project, the PIC and North Idaho College had worked together but there had been little collaboration between these two institutions and the unions which have been influential in the state. Much broader and more cohesive collaborative activities are now occurring.

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Identifies the language demands of critical job tasks for limited English proficient employees at an industrial site (Honeywell), and designs and pilots an on-site training program which integrates the technical and language skills needed for worker effectiveness.

Charles Derber
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology
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Provides seminars and counseling for workers employed in changing industries to increase their knowledge and preparation about economic and structural shifts in the economy. Conducts forums with 11 AFL-CIO affiliates involving all levels of union membership.

Victor Langer
Instructional Resources Coordinator
MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
1015 North 6th Street
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Develops a new curriculum in automated manufacturing, electrical design and information management, through faculty and software development. The College recently received large amounts of equipment from corporations and the state.

Ivan Charner
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR WORK AND LEARNING
1200 18th Street, NW
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Provides a Resource Agent that can expand the potential impact of postsecondary education in its response to changes in the economy. Focusing on 21 FIPSE projects, functions include: policy and program development, dissemination, and networking.

Eric Brown
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2321 Elm Street
Manchester, NH 03104
(603) 669-3432

Bill Andrews
Monadnock Training Council
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(603) 673-1524

Assists employers to cooperate with postsecondary educational institutions in providing education for adults who want to learn skills to get jobs or to advance in their organizations.

James Van Dyke
PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Cascade Campus
12000 South 49th Ave. Portland, OR 97219
(503) 244-6111

Creates a small business development center which will provide education experience and guidance to new and developing small business enterpreneurs. The Center will become the cornerstone of the redevelopment of Northeast Portland that will improve economic conditions and create new jobs.

Gary Rhodes
RIO SALADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
135 North Second Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85003
(602) 256-7722

Designs a one year A.A. degree curriculum in two technical areas within the electronics industry, primarily for adult women and minorities at Motorola.

Mike Maguire
Metropolitan Re-Employment Project
ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
5600 Oakland Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63110
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Assists unemployed workers in St. Louis with basic skills instruction, short seminars, family counseling and job training. Workers may elect to pursue an A.A. degree.

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Retrains scientifically educated adults who have been dislocated or who need up-graded skills. In cooperation with local industry, faculty will design modules in electro-optics, biotechnology, microelectronics science, and chemical and physical analysis.

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Extends verbal, mathematical and computer literacy training to rural adults. The courses, taught by peer instructors, will help people qualify for new types of jobs.

Jeanne Gordus
Institute of Science & Technology
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
2200 Bonisteel Boulevard
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
(313) 763-3645

Addresses the problem of unemployment by preparing workers to take advantage of retraining opportunities. Develops an intensive program using study circles to provide support, counseling, information and career redirection in a changing economy.

John David
Director
Center for Adult Education
WEST VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Montgomery, WV 25136
(304) 442-3157

Develops literacy education for rural adult workers, based on current on-site educational programs for union members.